

seems to have ignored the reports of *P. theobaldi* and *P. reticulatus* in Kashmir province by Smith (1935).

Phrynocephalus reticulatus Eichwald
Ladakh Toad Agama

Phrynocephalus reticulatus Eichwald (1831).
Zool. spec., p. 183.

Material examined: (2) 1 male and 1 female; June, 1976, Leh.

Habits similar to that of *P. theobaldi* but

an uncommon species. About *P. reticulatus*, Smith (1935, p. 232) recorded, "The species is included in the fauna of the Indian Empire on the strength of a single specimen in the British Museum collected by Schlagintweit brothers and said to have come from Ladakh, Kashmir. Unfortunately the localities given by these collectors cannot be relied on." The collection of 2 specimens of *P. reticulatus* from Ladakh confirms its occurrence within Indian limits.

DEPARTMENT OF BIOSCIENCES,
UNIVERSITY OF JAMMU,
JAMMU-180 001,
October 1, 1981.

DEEP N. SAHI
P. L. DUDA

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22. ON FLYING LIZARD IN MUNDANTHURAI SANCTUARY

Flying lizards *Draco dussumieri* are fairly common in Mundanthurai along the ribbon of forests, fringing rivers Thambaraparani and Servalar. In walks along the riverside footpaths, Ficus Prop-Kanikudi Nature Trail, Rauf Ali's Bonnet Macaque study area, Glyn Davies, 'Squirrel study area and around Kodamadi Rest House region, they can be seen, if one waits and watches for them. The bright yellow dewlap projecting and disappearing helps to locate this lizard though the folded wings are difficult to see. It is easier to watch them in the plantation of Teak, Neem

and Bombax just adjoining the river Servalar, when they descend down to convenient eye-level. They are found along the border plantation lines 2-5 rows of planted area parrallel to the river. On seeing one gliding in circles and landing on a planted tree 1m above ground, then running up to a height of 5-6 m then gliding down. I searched the area and located another lizard moving on the ground. One possible guess was that the lizard on the ground was a female, who had come to the ground for laying eggs.

The teak poles were about 6 m tall almost

uniform in height at an interval of 11 feet while gliding the lizard turned away from the tree lifted up let itself fall on outstretched wings, resulting in a vertical fall of $1\frac{1}{2}$ -2m a short glide at an angle of about 45° to the tree and followed a near horizontal flight path till it landed on the next tree at a point $1\frac{1}{2}$ m from ground, keeping head upwards. All these

took about 3-5 seconds. Slowly spiralling up as it climbed the tree. Insect population may be highest in such river border areas. Srirangan, a tracker from the local forest tribal community "kanis", said that they can be easily killed by whipping with tender branches; are roasted over a fire and eaten, younger tribals are not aware of this practice.

WILDLIFE WARDEN,
MUDUMALAI WILDLIFE SANCTUARY,
UDHAGAMANDALAM-643 001,
TAMIL NADU,
November 12, 1982.

J. MANGALRAJ JOHNSON

23. LONGEVITY OF FISH *MEGALOPS CYPRINOIDES* (BROUSS)

(With a text-figure)

How long does a fish live, has been a common inquiry in ordinary parlance and has usually been replied to as 'we really do not know', though several anecdotes exist raising the longevity to 250 years as in the case of some old carps and the mythical Great Pyke of the Emperor Fredrick II of England, as recorded by Norman (1931). The same author quotes Dr Roger that "Statements concerning most of the very old carps rest on unreliable evidence and although there is good reason for believing that in artificial conditions this fish may attain a good old age, it is doubtful whether it exceeds 50 years in a wild state." Lagler *et al.* (1977) also records the probable long life of carps as about 50 years. This uncertainty persists because of lack of any reliable data. However, available records in the Fisheries Department of Maharashtra and my own observations at Lonavla have provided dependable information about longevity of *Megalops cyprinoides*. This is being recorded here.

The fish is, as many would know, a marine one, the larvae and young ones of which enter brackish water and then into fresh water, to feed on the rich animal life, till they grow upto about 15 cms and then return to the sea for further growth up to about a metre. Its near cousin is the great tarpon which inhabits estuaries of northern America. If the seaward movement of *M. cyprinoides* is obstructed they remain for long years in fresh water, but do not breed. In July 1939, the Fisheries Section of the then Department of Industries decided to stock fingerlings of Catla Rohu, Calbasu, etc in different perennial waters of the then Bombay Presidency in which Walwhan and Shirota lakes of Tata Hydro-Electric Company were included (vide annual report of the Department of Industries, Fisheries Section 1939-40). As the fingerlings of *M. cyprinoides* were also found to be very efficacious in controlling cyclops, an intermediate host (carrier) of the dreaded quineaworm pest (Setna & Kulkarni 1940), one of the con-